



# NEWSLETTER

CALIFORNIA ARBORETUM FOUNDATION

MAY, 1974

## Virginia Robinson Estate to Become Botanic Garden



The front entrance to the house.

Mrs. Harry W. Robinson has given her Beverly Hills estate to the County for preservation and use as a public arboretum or botanic garden following her death. To maintain the property she is bequeathing to the California Arboretum Foundation an endowment fund of one million dollars. Her wishes to found the "Virginia Robinson Gardens" have been realized after many months of negotiations between the Foundation, the

Director of the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens, the County, and her lawyer, Odell McConnell. Odell's patience, perseverance, and perspicacity are to be admired. Without him, wishes would still be dreams. The California Arboretum Foundation is also grateful to Mrs. Forrest Q. Stanton, and Supervisor Debs. Their foresight and assistance were invaluable.

It all began when Mr. and Mrs.



Virginia Robinson and Odell McConnell

Robinson returned from a three year residence in India and went looking for the Los Angeles Country Club. The year was 1911 and what is now the City of Beverly Hills was all open country. In their search for the country club, the Robinsons spotted and purchased the first five acres of what was to become their home and extensive gardens on Eldon Way. The land was being developed by Burton Green of the Rodeo Land and Water Company.

Mrs. Robinson's father, Nat Dryden, an architect, designed the residence and the Robinsons took off for Europe to remain there until the house was completed. They returned to this country in 1913 and stayed at the Los Angeles Country Club while the house was furnished. The Robinsons gave their first dinner party in their new home on September 8th for twenty-four guests. Though the Robinsons continued to

(Continued on page 2)



The Pool House.

travel a lot and were only in California about two months at a time, there has been an endless stream of parties given by the hospitable Mrs. Robinson from that day to this. To complement the gardens and accommodate extra guests a pool house, designed by William Richards, was added in 1924.

Mrs. Robinson wanted a typical California garden and planted olive trees, pomegranates, and persimmons. These did well for awhile but within ten years all were gone for want of a hotter, drier climate. She started to collect tropical plants and, with the help of Charles Gibbs Adams, obtained many plants from the government. There are now dozens of *Howea* palms growing in the gardens and Mrs. Robinson says they are all progeny of the first one she planted. She obtained other tropical plants from the Popenoe and Coolidge Nurseries and Mr. Popenoe and Mr. Coolidge would often come to visit her. The tropics have thrived and Mrs. Robinson has seven men working full time to take care of the lush gardens and grounds.

Joseph Winchester Robinson, founder of Robinson's department store, was Mrs. Robinson's father-in-law. She remembers that on her first visit to the store with her governess at age five she bought \$5.00 worth of handkerchiefs. Hankies in those days were very cheap and her mother was

appalled at the quantity she brought home and made her use every one of them. Mrs. Robinson has never felt the same craving for handkerchiefs since that day. After the death of his father, Harry Robinson headed the store until he died and then Mrs. Robinson was in charge for 17 years until it was sold to Allied Department Stores.

In recognition of Mrs. Robinson's bequest to the California Arboretum Foundation, the Board of Trustees is going to hold a reception and dinner in her honor in the Demonstration Home Gardens on September 10th. We hope that many members will join us that evening and enjoy the privilege of meeting this remarkable lady who will be celebrating her 98th birthday on September 21.



A view of the garden.

## AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE STUDENTS TOUR ARBORETUM

On Friday, March 15, the Arcadia Rotarians hosted the American Field Service students who are spending this school year in the homes of West San Gabriel Valley Rotarians. After a luncheon at the Flamingo-Ramada Hotel, the students were given a spe-

cial tour of the Arboretum grounds by the Horticulturist, John Provine. Highlights of the day were when the girls were presented with stalks of cymbidium orchids and pictures of the group were taken by the local newspapers as they toured the Coach Barn.



Back Row: Alf Erik Skille (Norway), Alvin Aquino (Philippines), Thora Press (South Africa). Middle Row: Bernard Lamour (France), Paivi Anneli Karvete (Finland), Yoshie Yamamoto (Japan), Peter Kraehenbuehl (Switzerland), Stephanie Malach (England), Ana Arfinengo (Peru). Front Row: Luis Alvarez (Spain), Marcos Queiroz (Brazil), Ulrich Geilinger (Switzerland).

# LASCA News Photographer Is a Very Busy Woman



Luaine Scheliga as photographed by Alice Douglas

Often the most interesting part of a newsletter is the accompanying photographs and the Foundation is very lucky to have the talents of Las Voluntarias member Luaine Scheliga (pronounce that Shell' iga) adorn these pages. Born in North Platte, Nebraska, Luaine's parents came to Pasadena for a Rose Bowl game (Nebraska vs. Stanford), fell in love with southern California, and returned to settle in Inglewood where her father worked for Douglas Aircraft on the A4D.

Luaine went to El Camino College and San Jose State and met her husband, who was in the Army, through her girl friend. At first sight he decided he was going to marry her but it took Luaine two years to make up her mind. So they got married, had two sons, and lived on a shoestring while her husband got his master's degree in hydro-geology at U.S.C. Luaine had taken art courses in college and was interested in photography as an art form. When her husband gave her a little enlarger, her interest became such that she wanted to learn everything possible about photography and enrolled in a night class given by the Marineland photographer and read every book

on the subject at the local library. Her opportunity to become a professional photographer came when her husband was assigned to Tunisia for two years. Luaine went with him and was hired by a French anthropologist who was collecting native arts and crafts. They traveled throughout the country, Luaine taking pictures. She also worked for the Ford Foundation Family Planning Program, taking photographs for their journal. The Foundation would send a van out to the remote villages to pick up the women and bring them to the infirmary for contraceptive advice. Luaine would photograph the women at the infirmary. After one year back in the states, the Scheligas left for 2 years in Somalia where Luaine worked for U.S. police advisors and did a photographic catalog for Eastern Michigan University. The family finally bought a house in Sierra Madre to give the boys a settled life during their teens, not that any one of them likes to give up traveling.

With time on her hands and a creative spirit that had to be doing something, Luaine volunteered at the Arboretum and, once her talents were known, was assigned to the Research Section where there was a great need for her skills as a photographer. She literally disappeared into the darkroom and spent two and three days a week from dawn to dark on research projects. Called from the darkroom into the daylight to become photographer for *LASCA NEWS*, Luaine's bright smile and flash bulbs are now illuminating every event and corner of the Arboretum. She is also keeping up with the demands of the research department and taking thirteen units in journalism at Pasadena City College. Grass will never grow under Luaine's feet, even at the Arboretum.

Do you wonder about the LASCA in *LASCA LEAVES* and *LASCA NEWS*? It is an acronym for Los Angeles State and County Arboretum.



Patricia Warren

## Historical Society Honors Curator Patricia Warren

Patricia Warren Armstrong, historical curator of the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens, was honored March 10 by the California Historical Society at their annual meeting in San Diego. Ms. Warren was one of six prominent Californians to receive an award of merit in recognition of her many significant contributions to the study of California history. Arboretum volunteers Marilyn Bochte, Carol Brayshaw, Phyllis Chapman and Margaret Dean, flew south to be present at the award ceremony.

## Henry Evans Prints For Sale In Gift Shop

For sale in the Gift Shop are some outstanding numbered prints of botanical subjects by internationally known San Francisco artist Henry Evans. He achieves beautiful color and artistry in his linoleum cuts printed on his 100 year old Washington hand press. Once you have seen them, you will want to become a collector.

# Fourth Baldwin Bonan

Pictures being worth more than a thousand words, the editor relinquishes these pages to the photographer. A million year's sale the greatest yet with a net profit of \$17,591. Eight hundred attended the pre



# za a Roaring Success

Thanks to John Provine, Mary Gerry, Colleen O'Neill, staff members, trustees, and countless volunteers, who made this view party on Saturday night, thirteen thousand came on Sunday — a record breaker!



# California Arboretum Foundation Has New Logo and Brochure



Carrie Harbicht, Bob Bullock, Tootie Grivich, Roy Murphy, John Contreras

Under the guidance of Robert Bullock, instructor of design and commercial art, students at Citrus College in Azusa designed a new logo and the format for a new brochure for the California Arboretum Foundation. John Contreras of Glendora, the originator of the logo which is being used on all the Foundation brochures, stationery, publications, and on the annual meeting invitation, is now a communications major at California State University at Fullerton. Carrie Harbicht helped get the logo ready for the printer and designed the format of the brochure. Carrie is an art major at California State University at Los Angeles. A grateful president of the Foundation, Tootie Grivich, awarded Carrie and John with \$25 U.S. Savings Bonds

and membership in the California Arboretum Foundation.

Design being only a part of the brochure, it was necessary to find photographs to illustrate the text and adorn the cover or back, whichever way you please to look at the very interesting brochure. There is no right way to open it. Both covers are equally handsome and very different. At the suggestion of Robert Bullock, Roy Murphy, a commercial and nature photographer, was asked to donate his professional talents. The photographs in the brochure are testimony of Roy's artistry and his generosity. His pictures of the Queen Anne Cottage, which is reproduced in the brochure, and of the elegant neck and head of a peacock, which is used as a masthead for this publi-

cation, have been blown up to poster size and are for sale in the Gift Shop.

Robert Bullock has been an instructor at Citrus College for 9 years and is also a part-time assistant professor at Azusa Pacific College, where he heads the Art Department. Bob has guided this project for the Foundation from inception to a very successful conclusion, bringing all the parts and participants together.

The California Arboretum Foundation is proud of its new logo and brochure and very appreciative of the generosity of Robert Bullock, Roy Murphy, Carrie Harbicht, and John Contreras, in making these possible. We have enclosed the new brochure with this newsletter. Please admire it and then give it to a non-member who promises to fill out the membership application and return it with a check to the Foundation Office. If every member gets us one new member, our support group will number over 4,000. If every member would get us two new members our list would swell to . . . UNBELIEVABLE HEIGHTS! Help us reach them. Additional brochures are available at the Foundation Office or by calling 447-8207.

## Summer Fun and Adventure For Your Children

Classes will be offered at the Youth Education Department this summer for children age 6 to age 15. Two three-week sessions will begin the last week in June and subjects will include plant crafts, nature study, and horticultural classes. Registration forms are available by sending a postcard with your name and address to the Youth Education Department, Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, 301 North Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia, California 91006. Classes fill up fast so do it TODAY!

## Boy Scout Troop Donates To Bonanza Profits

Eight members of Boy Scout Troop 103 of Arcadia worked throughout the Sunday Bonanza sale helping overburdened customers carry purchases to their cars. These noble efforts brought the boys a total of \$3.00 in tips which they generously donated to the Foundation to add to the profits of the Bonanza sale.

# FOUNDATION TO SPONSOR PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

During a luncheon meeting with Tootie Grivich, Foundation president, and Alice Douglas, newsletter editor, Lorie Alispones made the chance suggestion that a photography contest would bring new friends into the Arboretum support group. With a green light from the Director, Lorie's suggestion led to a whirlwind round of meetings and telephone calls and the photography contest is a new event on the Arboretum's 1974 calendar.

A committee of five was called together. They are: Lorie Alispones, a recent communications graduate of California State University at Fullerton; Lorene Charis, the chairperson of the very successful PIC 74 photo contest; Alice Ferl, a photography devotee and member of Las Voluntarias; Luaine Scheliga, *LASCA NEWS* photographer; and Alice Douglas, *LASCA NEWS* editor and a new student of the mysteries of the black box and the darkroom. With two Alice's, and a Lorie, a Luaine, and a Lorene, the committee members are a strong mixture of ideas and opinions and instead of one becoming chairperson, they all became collaborators.

The first thing needed to launch the contest was sponsors and Foundation members Mrs. Hancock Ban-

ning, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Harrison Chandler, Mrs. Philip Chandler, Lady Crocker, Peter L. Douglas, Mrs. Preston Hotchkis, Mrs. George Jagels, Mrs. Harry E. Laughlin, Mrs. E. Mudd Marvin, Mrs. C. H. Matthiesen, Jr., the Santa Anita Camera Shop, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert P. Strub, responded generously so that the contest will have over \$1,000 in awards and prizes plus a scholarship award from Artography, a famous Hollywood photographic school of arts, courtesy of committee member Lorene Charis who teaches there.

The contest has been titled FOCUS on the ARBORETUM and the acronym, FOTA, derived from the first letters of the title words, is generally used when referring to the contest. The competition will be open to everyone, entries may be black and white or color prints, there is no entry fee, and ALL PICTURES MUST BE TAKEN ON THE ARBORETUM GROUNDS. Entry blanks have been mailed to all members and are also available at the Foundation Office or by mailing a request to FOTA, 301 North Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia 91006. DEADLINE FOR ALL ENTRIES IS NOVEMBER 1, 1974. The winning photographs will be exhibited in the Lecture Hall of the Arboretum during the weekend of No-

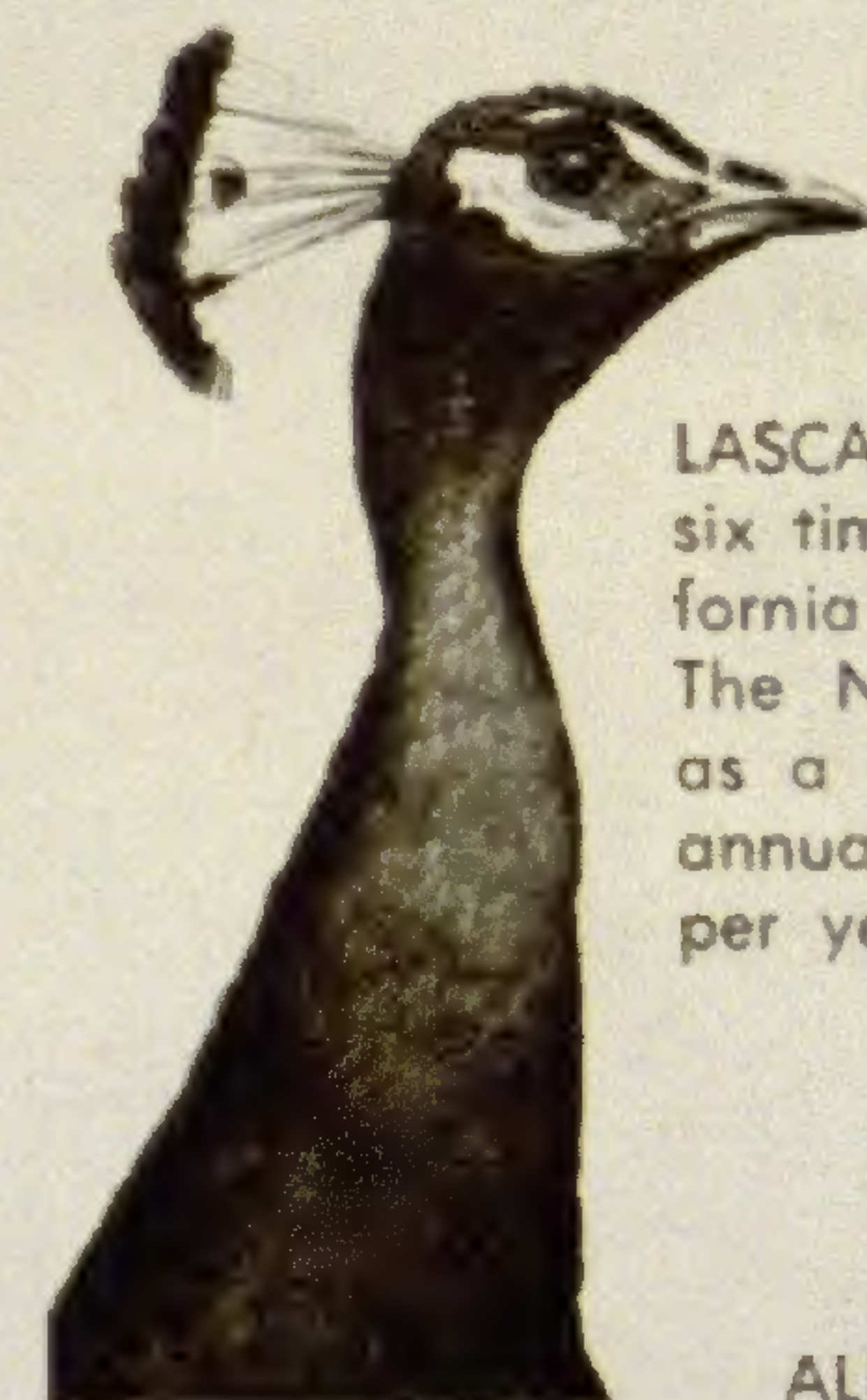
vember 22nd to 24th. Among the panel of judges will be Eudorah Moore of California Design; William Aplin, photographer for *SUNSET* magazine; Roy Murphy, commercial and nature photographer of Glendora who so generously donated the pictures for the new Foundation brochure; Tomo Ogita, an expert in Asian art and photography; and Floyd Roberts, past president of the Professional Photographers of America and now chairman of their advisory board.

We wish every success to this creative idea of young Lorie Alispones and look forward to seeing many members at the preview and award ceremony on the evening of November 22. We hope some of our members will be among the winners of this photo contest.

## Volunteer News

- Library volunteers welcome questions related to botany or California history. They will research and return a short written report to you.
- New volunteer field leaders who completed the fall training and are now actively engaged in field trips are: Mavis Blake, Charlene Duncan, Jane Evans, Jane Jackson, Gerry Kaiser, Judy Lapice, Vicki Munger, Colleen O'Neill, Marge Roos, Joan Turner, Mary Lou Workman, and Sheila Loy.

On Bonanza Sunday as the crowds swirled around Mary Gerry, chairperson, while she was valiantly trying to learn the intricacies of running a popcorn machine, someone asked her, "Where is the plant sale?"



LASCA NEWS is published six times a year by the California Arboretum Foundation. The NEWSLETTER is included as a benefit of membership, annual dues starting at \$10 per year.

Photographs by  
LUAINE SCHELIGA

Editor  
ALICE FROST DOUGLAS

Lorie Alispones, Luaine Scheliga, Alice Ferl, Lorene Charis  
photographed by Alice Douglas

# lasca news

Newsletter of the California Arboretum Foundation

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 528  
Arcadia, California

CALIFORNIA ARBORETUM FOUNDATION, 301 NORTH BALDWIN AVENUE, ARCADIA, CALIFORNIA 91006 • TELEPHONE (213) 447-8207

## FOUNDATION SPONSORED ARBOR DAY PROGRAM

Until 1972 Arbor Day was celebrated on the grounds of the Arboretum with a local school band playing triumphant music, a few speeches by Arboretum and County dignitaries, several hundred school children and 4 or 5 scout troops in attendance, and a ceremonial planting of a tree by staff members. Those attending were given a small tree in a one inch container to take home. The survival rate of these trees was never known.

In 1972 the Youth Education Division, with the assistance of volunteers, planned a program that would take Arbor Day to the schools, instead of the schools coming to the Arboretum. Attractive resource pack-

ets explaining the project and full of ideas for school programs and student involvement were mailed to all the schools in Los Angeles County. Participating schools were given an Arboretum introduction, *Tabebuia chrysotricha*, the Golden Trumpet Tree, in a five gallon can. Last year the schools were given Liquidambar trees and this year another LASCA introduction *Koelreuteria integrifolia*, the Golden Rain Tree. The success of the first year, which seemed great at the time, is modest in comparison with the success of this year. Nine hundred and eighty-four trees in five gallon containers were given by the Department to participants in Arbor Day programs.

*Cassia leptophylla* is being grown

for next year although the runaway popularity of the program is putting a severe strain on the budget. It is sincerely hoped that businesses or organizations interested in youth and the environment will come to the aid of the Department and donate funds to continue the financing of this excellent community project.

This year's program was started under the direction of Gertrude Woods, head of the Education Division, with the assistance of Dagmar Appel, volunteer chairperson, Eileen Hume, and Marilyn Llewellyn. When Gertrude retired and Dagmar moved to the Chicago area, Tak Niiya took charge of the program for the Department and Marilyn Llewellyn as volunteer chairperson.

### in the GIFT SHOP

books . crafts . plants  
prints . garden sundries



hours  
10 to 5

